

CBW

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EU 'has snubbed coach'

MARTIN COLE TECHNICAL & MINIBUS EDITOR

THE Passenger Transport Council (CTP) of the International Road Transport Union (IRU) wants the European Union institutions to use the forthcoming mid-term review of the 2001 White Paper on Transport Policy to encourage greater use of coaches, buses and taxis.

Despite that document's preoccupation with growing congestion on Europe's roads, it made no effort to exploit the

economic and environmental benefits offered by collective transport of passengers by road. Coach travel is safer than going by private car and one coach can easily replace 30 cars, yet the only references to coaches in the entire 100-page White Paper were in a couple of data tables.

Francesco Pacifico, President of the CTP, said: "The multi-stakeholder European Targeted Action for Sustainable Tourism and

IRU calls on Brussels to encourage greater use of

Transport (MuSTT) study, finalised last October by the European Commission's DG Enterprise, showed that transport is vital to tourism and that, in many circumstances, coach transport is the most environmentally friendly solution. EU policymakers must now put in place effective policies to promote transport by coaches, buses and taxis, so blatantly neglected in the 2001 White Paper."

The first priority must be to end the various forms of discrimination which are hampering effective development of collective transport of passengers by road. For example, long-distance coach operators pay duty on the fuel used in their vehicles and VAT on turnover, whereas airlines pay neither. Private coach operators also compete against directly subsidised state-owned railways and indirectly subsidised low-

Arriva's £45 million plan for Merseyside

ARRIVA plans to invest up to £45 million in Merseyside's bus system in an ambitious set of new proposals, which, it says, could take its total investment over ten years to £85 million.

Top of its plan is to spend £20 million on new lowfloor buses on all main routes serving Liverpool by 2008 and a further £25 million to provide lowfloor vehicles across Merseyside by 2011.

The proposals are contained in a comprehensive plan called 'Buses on Merseyside: The next five years'. Predictably, Arriva is also seeking partnership investment from local Passenger Transport Executive Merseytravel and other local authorities of some £75 million.

Arriva says the stakeholders around the region must work together to realise its vision. It is calling for closer links between

Merseytravel and the highway authorities - even suggesting that the PTE should have powers currently held by the highway authorities.

Five years since the firm took over Merseybus, it has invested £40m in new vehicles, infrastructure improvements and staff development.

Arriva North West MD Bob Hind outlined the rationale for the improvements in a statement: "When we took over Merseybus, we set out our commitments to the people of Merseyside - and we have delivered on our promises.

"A recent survey showed that over 92% of customers were satisfied with our services but we're not complacent. We are now sharing our vision of how bus services could and should operate on Merseyside. Our proposals

are an unprecedented commitment to working in partnership to deliver this success while maintaining an effective and sustainable network."

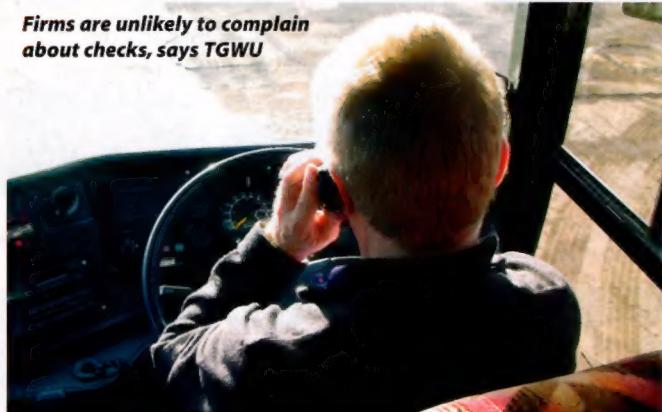
Arriva is also calling for stringent quality controls for school

bus operators selected through the tendering process and wants a new approach to funding of the region's concessionary travel scheme. It also wants to revise and revitalise multi-operator and multi-modal tickets.



Union calls for driver criminal record checks

Firms are unlikely to complain about checks, says TGWU



THE Transport & General Workers Union has called on traffic commissioners to provide regular Criminal Records Bureau checks on school bus drivers.

T&G national organiser Graham Stevenson says the way in which local authorities and operators perform "ad-hoc" checks is unsatisfactory and claims that the checks are in any case "disproportionate."

"Bus drivers complain about assaults, spitting, verbal and physical abuse, rowdy and at some

times riotous behaviour on school buses, sometimes endangering the safety of those on board, including the driver, as well as other road users," said Mr Stevenson.

"But there is almost no evidence of bus drivers sexually molesting children in their charge."

The T&G says it should be for the traffic commissioners to undertake checks against specific offences relating to sexual acts against children.

travel'

coaches and buses

cost airlines, yet receive no subsidies themselves. A balanced and sustainable passenger transport market cannot be achieved while the different modes do not compete on equal terms.

Mr Pacifico continued: "Coaches frequently encounter hostile policies, such as charging of exorbitant fees for access to inadequate city centre coach-parking facilities and then failing to use the resulting revenues to improve those facil-



ties. Such policies are short sighted for it has been shown that a tourist arriving by coach spends 40% more than the average tourist, and

that coach tourism is more resistant to recession than other forms of tourism."

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New London terminus for easyBus

BUDGET travel specialist easyBus has altered its London terminus - moving away from Hendon Central (North London) to Baker Street/Gloucester Place in Central London.

David Rawsthorn, easyBus general manager, said: "Since we launched easyBus in August 2004 we have been listening to our cus-

tomers. Many have said that easyBus is a great idea but they would prefer a terminus in London that was in the central area, closer to the attractions, shopping and with more local transport links.

"We have chosen Baker Street as our new terminus. It is right by two of London's biggest attractions - Madame Tussauds and the London

Planetarium. Best of all, Baker Street Station is served by no fewer than five Tube lines (Circle, Jubilee, Bakerloo, Metropolitan and the Hammersmith & City Line)."

The easyBus Spring 2005 Timetable (March 13 - June 11) has been launched. Seats are bookable online with fares starting from £1 One Way.

Punters on the scales in study

PASSENGERS and luggage from Eurolines and Shearings were put on the scales last weekend in a bid to find out why touring coaches are increasingly overweight.

The study saw touring and express coaches targeted by a team from the Confederation of Passenger Transport, who weighed over 400 people and their baggage at three sites for a European study into the growing problem of touring coach weight.

"I have to admit I felt a bit daft at first," said CPT head of coach serv-

ices Allan Edmondson. "But the passengers reacted very well and were helpful. I was shocked at how idiotically heavy some of the suitcases were - some more than 30 kilos."

The gross vehicle weight estimates are based on an average passenger and luggage weight established decades ago, and it is believed that heavily-seated coaches are now falling foul of the rising average weight of the public.

"This isn't just an overweight coach issue, because handling lug-

gage that heavy every day is probably a Health & Safety issue," said Mr Edmondson.

The team has passed its statistics back to the International Road Transport Union (IRU) for analysis. A report on the findings is to be published in summer.

"Although this wasn't the easiest project to plan and implement, the information gathered will be invaluable to the industry in aiming to influence design and legislation to stay within the law," said Mr Edmondson.

Scooter guidelines called for

A COUNCIL has called for national guidelines on the loading of motorised scooters following a fatal accident.

The Dial-a-Ride minibus from which an elderly man fell to his death has had a prohibition order placed on its tail-lift, and the Health & Safety Executive has banned ALL loading of people riding motorised disability scooters on to Hartlepool's Dial-a-Ride serv-

ices until completion of an investigation.

"There should be national guidelines," a council spokesman told CBW. "This issue is relevant to all transport operators asked to load these scooters."

A HSE statement accuses the operator of 'poor maintenance' of the tail-lift, although the device was serviced according to approved schedules.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Citylink to the T

Scottish Citylink is providing coach services for the T in the Park music festival near Kinross for the fourth year running. Prices start from £25 return from Aberdeen, falling to £9 from Perth.

Dawson hires Kelly

Dawsonrentals bus and coach is strengthening its customer support team with the appointment of Paul Kelly as operations director. The firm now operates more than 1,600 vehicles, on contracts with many leading coach and bus operators in the UK.

Drivers' buzz

Drivers at Buzzlines are being encouraged to pass their advanced driving tests, and two are qualified as fleet advanced driving assessors. The firm plans to include advanced driving skills in the training programme for all drivers.

Freeze duty call

The Freight Transport Association is calling for fuel duty to be frozen in the Government's 2005 budget. It says high oil prices already put UK firms at a competitive disadvantage.

Guides rides

First Group is supporting the Guide Dogs charity by allowing puppy trainers in possession of an ID card to travel for free on all First buses. The deal is equivalent to a charitable donation of more than £600,000.

Volunteer bus link

A volunteer bus link in the Eden Valley is running after receiving a £10,000 grant. The funds are being used to buy a new 16-seater minibus.

Oyster payment to be capped

LONDON'S Oyster smartcard payments will now be capped when they reach the price of a Travelcard each day.

The pre-paid Oyster card has been in use on the buses, trains and Tube as part of the Prestige scheme for more than a year but passengers have so far had to expect to pay above the daily Travelcard price for complex journeys. New programming can now 'tot up' the cash spent by each passenger.

Every day, three million Oyster card journeys are made and TfL claims that cashless public transport will return £100 million to public coffers in the next five years, cutting out £2 million fraud and an estimated £15 million in passengers' time spent queuing.

Cantabrica reeling over

ANDY RODEN REPORTER

HIGHLY respected Watford operator Cantabrica is reeling over the death of a popular hostess after one of its coaches crashed in Germany at the weekend.

The coach, a two-year-old Volvo, overturned on a bend on the A6 autobahn near Mannheim on Saturday morning.

Nine were injured in the accident, including the driver, and two are in a "serious" condition.

And the response of German police is coming under close scrutiny after they alleged in a statement that the coach had "bald summer tyres" and was travelling at 100km/h. One eyewitness reputedly says the speed of the coach was closer to 60km/h. The tyres fitted are the same as those fitted on many coaches currently operated throughout Europe, and

German police tyre claim provokes anger

Cantabrica has six other vehicles operating without difficulty in snowy conditions in the French Alps, raising questions of whether the police's assertion that the tyre was faulty are correct.

Cantabrica used the Confederation of Passenger Transport's media relations service to answer press inquiries and, in a statement for the firm, the CPT said: "We are surprised and

concerned about the press statement released by the German Police. We believe that it is irresponsible and unhelpful to jump to conclusions before the results of a full investigation are known.

"We hope that the investigation will be as exhaustive as possible and, in addition to an examination of the vehicle's tachograph, will also include an assessment of both the state of the

Renault launches Quickshift6 for Master and Trafic models



RENAULT Trafic and Master models are now available with a new six-speed semi-automatic 'Quickshift6' gearbox.

Quickshift6 is claimed to combine the performance and operating economy of a manual gearbox with the ease of use of an automatic transmission. Renault believes the new system will account for around 5% of total sales in each range. It will be available with 2.5 dCi engines rated at 100, 120 and 140hp -

depending on model. The new versions go on sale in the UK in spring 2005 carrying a price premium of £800 over standard models.

The Quickshift6 gearbox (PA6) is developed from Renault's six-speed manual gearbox and consists of a manual gearbox combined with a module (computer and transducers) which automates the clutching, declutching and gearchanging operations. A second computer controls

engine torque output and speed to ensure smooth gearchanging. It offers a choice of manual clutchless gearchanging or a fully automatic mode.

Renault claims the system can save from 8-10% in fuel compared to a conventional gearbox. Additionally, the control system is adaptive and will match its operation to the driver's style. Also included are aids to moving off - one for when the vehicle is heavily laden and the other for low-traction conditions.

These functions are selected via a dashboard-mounted switch.

An indicator light on the dashboard shows the selected mode.

The 'load' mode, for use when the vehicle is heavily laden, reduces clutch slip and alters the gearchange threshold points.

The 'snow' mode automatically activates the automatic mode and limits wheel spin when starting from rest.

Hong Kong orders 25 Volvo deckers

HONG KONG operator KMB (Kowloon Motor Bus) has ordered 25 Volvo B9TL double-decker buses from Volvo Buses - the first order from Hong Kong for this chassis.

The bodywork will be built in Northern Ireland by Wrightbus and deliveries will start soon and continue until October, continuing the bodybuilder's success in expanding its markets.

The new tri-axle Volvo B9TL lowfloor chassis features Volvo's nine-litre, 300bhp, Euro 3 engine and a six-speed automatic ZF transmission.

Total passenger capacity is 124; 53 seats on the upper deck, 27 on the lower deck and 44 standing on the lower deck with room for a wheelchair.

"Highly successful operation of previous Volvo vehicle concepts within the KMB fleet has led to this important order," said Paul West, managing director of Volvo Bus Hong Kong.

February 24: Affordable Mass Transit, CBI Conference Centre, London. 01224 263134

March 1: Managing Fleet Safety Seminar, Glasgow. 0800 977 4088

March 2-3: British Travel Trade Fair, NEC. www.britishtaveltradefair.com

March 8: Delivering Better Bus Transport, Burlington Hotel, New Street, Birmingham. 020 7787 1210

March 8-9: Major Projects and the Environment, One Whitehall Place, Westminster, London.

020 7787 1210

March 8-10: International Forecourt & Fuel Equipment Show, NEC Birmingham. 01293 613400

March 11-13: Coach Tourism Council Conference, Novotel Bristol. 01227 762200

March 15: The Bus as Rapid Transit: taking the product to a new level of quality and passenger appeal, Glaziers Hall, London SE1. 020 7582 0128

March 15-17: Bonded Coach

Holidays Conference, Callela, Spain. karenh@cpt-uk.org

March 17: Making Smarter Choices Work, Dolphin Centre, Darlington. 020 7582 0128

March 18: Improving Transport in the North West, Atlantic Conference Suite, Manchester Airport. 020 7787 1210, www.thewaterfront.co.uk, conference@thewaterfront.co.uk

March 22: Managing Fleet Safety Seminar, Belfast. 0800 977 4088

March 23: Managing Occupational Road Risk - Driving Your Business Risk Down, Moreton Hall Centre, Warwick. 01952 292246, www.ttc-uk.com

March 30-31: London Transport Awards Dinner & Conference, Park Lane Hilton, London and CBI Conference Centre. 01224 263164

April 5-7: Commercial Vehicle Show, The NEC, Birmingham, Halls 6-12 & 17-20. 020 7235 7000, www.cvshow.com/atshow.com

death crash

highway and whether any gritting had taken place.

"We would be surprised if the investigation uncovered any vehicle faults but do not wish to speculate any further at this stage."

The firm has operated for more than a quarter of a century without a serious accident and, immediately after the accident, Cantabrica arranged for passengers who wished to return to the UK to do so, as well as allowing others to continue with their holiday.

The victim, 57-year-old Rosie Nolan, worked for Cantabrica for many years and was popular with staff and customers. Staff at Cantabrica are said to be "devastated" over Ms Nolan's death.

Investigations are set to continue, and the driver, Steven Gibson, is likely to be interviewed by police later this week. An experienced driver, Mr Gibson suffered a broken leg and hip in the accident, but his condition is not thought to be life-threatening.



Cantabrica: used CPT's media relations service

Vauxhall unveils 'year of the conversion' strategy for CV Show

VAUXHALL is declaring 2005 its "year of the conversion" and promises a wide display at the Commercial Vehicle Show at the NEC from April 5.

Included in the line-up are Movano 17-seat and Vivaro nine-seat minibuses with which the

company aims to promote low cost of ownership through wide service intervals, low fuel consumption, and easy and cost-effective repairs.

Vauxhall will also use the NEC to launch its new six-speed clutchless Tecshift transmission system. This

is being made available across the Movano range fitted with the 2.5-litre CDTi common-rail diesel engine.

Tecshift is claimed to save around 8% on fuel and reduce wear and tear on driveline components.

"Our presence at the CV Show will demonstrate the perfect combination between Vauxhall chassis and specialist converters as we listen to what our customers want - and then deliver the goods," said Vauxhall commercial vehicles brand manager Steve Bryant.

Hybrids for London

LONDON is set for its first fleet of Wrightbus hybrids with an order for six from London Central.

Due for delivery this summer, the Electricity buses (below) offer emissions 30% lower than Euro 3 engines, with significant reductions in other outputs such as NOx.

The buses will run on the 360 route linking Elephant Castle and



the Albert Hall. The order has been sponsored by Transport for London, in a three-way partnership between it, London Central and Wrightbus.

Says operations director of London Buses Mike Weston: "It is an important step forward in examining ways of reducing emissions and I anticipate that the results of the Electricity operation will play a part in helping us decide on the types of vehicles we should be operating in London in the future."

Powered by a 1.9-litre engine driving a 120kW electric drivetrain, the Electricity uses regenerative braking to improve efficiency and recharge its lead-acid batteries.

Slovenia takes first S 431 DT

SLOVENIAN operator Edvard Vengust has become the first in Slovenia to take delivery of a flagship Setra S 431 DT double-deck coach (right).

The new coach is equipped with a Mercedes-Benz OM 502 LA engine developing 370 kW/503hp, coupled to a ZF-AS Tronic 12-speed automated manual transmission. It has a seating capacity of 83 and was fitted with a TopAir air-conditioning system, Blaupunkt satellite navigation system, a video monitoring system for the interior and a visual reversing aid for the driver. Another feature is the integral galley complete with coffee percolator, hot-dog heater and refrigerator.



Over the past six years, Setra has been stepping up its activities in Slovenia and other Central and Eastern European countries. Setra now sells new and used models from its entire coach and bus portfolio into Slovenia through local service and sales partner AC Intercar of Ljubljana.

EVENTS

April 5-9: Solutrans 2005, Eurexpo Exhibition Center, Lyon. www.solutrans.fr

April 8: Demand Responsive Transport Services, Meeting the Needs of Rural Communities in Angus, Royal Highland Centre, Inglister, Edinburgh. 01356 665000

April 14: Delivering Essential Transport in the Growth Areas, Crowne Plaza London - St James Hotel. 020 7787 1210, www.thewaterfront.co.uk

April 14-15: Transport Excellence Through Practical Delivery, University of Nottingham. 01223 881622

April 16-17: UK Coach Rally, Brighton
April 25-27: Confederation of Passenger Transport UK 30th Scottish Annual Conference, Gleneagles Hotel, Auchterader. 0131 272 2150

May 1-7: Confederation of Passenger Transport, Study Tour - Toronto and Montreal. 020 7240 3131

May 10-11: Association of Local Bus Company Managers annual confer-

ence, De Vere Belton Woods Hotel, nr Grantham. 0115 950 5745, e-mail nct@venuesunlimited.co.uk

May 18-19: Coach Tourism 2005, Stoneleigh Park, Warks. 020 7973 6671

May 31-June 3: transport logistic 2005, Munich.

www.transportlogistic.de

June 5-9: UITP World Congress and Exhibition, Rome.

<http://www.uitp.com/rome2005/>

September 14-15: Passenger

Transport Solutions, Olympia, London

October 5-6: Coach&Bus Live 2005, NEC, Birmingham. 0870 224 8617

October 21-26: Busworld, Kortrijk, Belgium. 00 32 51 226060, info@busworld.org

2006:

March 14-16: International Road Transport Union 30th World Congress, Dubai World Trade Centre. www.irtu.org

EXCLUSIVE

School safety charity

ANDY RODEN REPORTER

THE Belt Up School Kids campaign is 12 years old this year, but CBW has learned of an apparent split within the organisation that means two groups are working towards the same aims.

A new organisation called BUSK is being launched by former Belt Up School Kids stalwart Pat Harris, with a new logo to distinguish it from the charity she was involved in for many years. The reasons for Mrs Harris' decision are unclear but in a statement, her organisation says it will continue to push for improvements to schools safety.

BUSK and Belt Up School Kids are separate entities despite hav-

ing similar names (BUSH was previously used as an abbreviation for Belt Up School Kids).

Meanwhile, Belt Up School Kids is also unwilling to talk about the new organisation, but says its national committee continues to meet. Further statements are expected from both sides in the near future.

In BUSK's statement, Mrs Harris says: "BUSK has been exceptionally successful in achieving what it set out to do but this does not mean that we can now sit back and relax when it comes to the safety of children."

"It is our success that means we can now expand the work we do to include the travelling

Now two groups working towards same aims

public in general.

"We believe that the public don't always appreciate the problems that transport operators and drivers come up against on a daily basis, and part of our expansion plan is to educate people about this aspect."

It says it intends to:

- Encourage parents to take more responsibility for their children while they travel on public transport
- Communicate the need for the general public to set a good example to children and young people, ie, belt up where belts are provided and generally how they behave towards the drivers and the vehicle

● Emphasise the important role of the driver

● Educate the public on the necessity to pay the going rate for transport to support the better operator who is often undercut by the cowboys who have little thought for the safety of their passengers

And the statement adds: "BUSK will still benefit from an advisory panel of experts in all areas of engineering, legal and medical professions, and the support of Mike Nolan, to ensure the campaign is a continued success." It was unclear when CBW went to press who would replace Mrs Harris at Belt Up School Kids.

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NOT-FOR-PROFIT bus operator ECT Bus is playing a key role in helping wipe out bus vandalism.

ECT provided Operation Eyesore - a Transport for London and Metropolitan

Police initiative to catch and prevent those who damage buses - with CCTV images of individuals vandalising its vehicles. The pictures made front-page news in the *Hayes and Harlington Gazette* and as

CCTV helps ECT catch vandals

a result there were 16 arrests.

Mark Stevenson, general manager, ECT Bus, which has operated Route 195 in West London since April 2003, said:

"At ECT we take pride in our efficient staff, vehicles and systems - not only when it comes to monitoring our CCTV footage but also the

WA Shearings stays blue - survey

CBW readers say Shearings and Wallace Arnold should retain the blue livery used by Shearings if their planned merger goes ahead - and that Wallace Arnold's brown should be ditched.

The results are from a light-hearted survey on CBW's website, www.cbwnet.co.uk, and the issue saw the fastest response yet. Just over 30% of readers say



Wallace Arnold's livery only liked by 10% of respondents

Shearings' blue should be retained, but only one in ten are in favour of brown.

A combined blue and brown livery scheme scored 17.9% of the vote, with silver, a colour neither company uses much, just ahead with 19.4%. Other colours receiving votes were black, a mixture of blue, black and brown, and red. Other, non-specified colours received almost 9% of the vote.

Says CBW editor Mark Williams: "The votes are in and the indus-

try clearly thinks Shearings' blue livery is a winner but it seems Wallace Arnold might be advised to get the image consultants in given the lack of support for its scheme."

Latest figures from www.cbwnet.co.uk - Britain's biggest and best online vehicle marketplace - show that pages on the site are visited 16,000 times a month, with more than 5,000 hits on the vehicle advertisement pages, around 20% of operators in the UK, each week.

Arriva buys

INTERNATIONAL expansion continues for Arriva plc with the acquisition of German bus company Sippel Group (Sippel), one of the country's largest privately-owned bus operators.

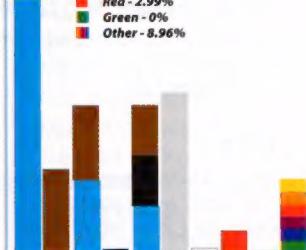
The buyout was completed for Euro 22 million (£15.4 million), with an additional maximum consideration of Euro 3 million (£2.1 m) payable against performance targets up to 2008.

Sippel's main activity is operating local public passenger transport as a sub-contractor to municipal clients alongside delivering special scheduled services to private-sector clients such as Frankfurt Airport. Its main operating territory covers the Rhine-Main area, including services in and around Frankfurt, Mainz and Wiesbaden. The move comes as the German market moves increasingly towards competitive tendering for key services.

Unaudited proforma figures for 2003 indicate Sippel achieved a

The new livery for WA Shearings should be...

Shearings blue - 31.34%
Wallace Arnold brown - 10.45%
Blue & Brown - 17.91%
Black - 1.49%
Blue, Black & Brown - 5.97%
Silver - 19.40%
White - 1.49%
Red - 2.99%
Green - 0%
Other - 8.96%



BUSK splits



BUSK: new organisation being formed

identification and reporting of new graffiti.

"Vandalism creates a threatening environment for our passengers. At ECT we constantly strive to provide the best possible service to our

customers, which is why we take vandalism really seriously. We are pleased to have helped Operation Eysore by providing these clear images of people damaging our buses."

German bus operation

turnover of Euro 32.6 m (£22.8 million), earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) of Euro 5.3 m (£3.7 m) and an operating profit of Euro 2.0 m (£1.4 m). Proforma net assets were Euro 2.4 m (£1.7 m) after deducting net debt of Euro 16.4 m (£11.5 m). Sippel employs around 740 people and operates some 220 vehicles.

Arriva entered the German transport market in April 2004 after it acquired controlling interest in rail company Prignitzer Eisenbahn Gruppe, which operates regional rail services in the federal states of North Rhine-Westphalia, Brandenburg and Mecklenburg-West Pomerania.

Last October it increased its holding to 76.9% and has since purchased an 89.8% holding in Regentalbahn AG, which operates regional passenger rail services in the federal states of Bavaria, Thuringia and Saxony as well as joint services with the Swiss and

Czech state railways.

Chief executive Bob Davies said: "The German public transport market is the largest in Europe, with the bus and rail sectors rapidly moving to a competitive tendering environment. This acquisition allows us to participate in future tenders for bus services in one of Germany's most important economic regions." Sippel has an excellent reputation for delivering high quality services to its customers and we look forward to working with the management and employees of this successful business to capitalise on further opportunities in this market."



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Go-Ahead soars on London growth

ANDY RODEN REPORTER

GO-AHEAD Group continued to grow profits and turnover in the last six months of 2004 but warns that growth in London - a key driver of the bus industry in recent years - is likely to slow.

The bus, rail and aviation services firm made pre-tax profits before goodwill amortisation in the six months to January 1 2005, of £49.6m (£47m in 2003) on turnover, including joint venture, of £637.9m (£633.8m).

Operating profit was £51.4m (£59.1m). Adjusted earnings per share, excluding the effects of exceptional items and goodwill amortisation, are calculated at 59.5p, with a dividend of 15p per

share - 4p up on 2003's interim results.

The group's bus businesses in London and the south have continued to grow. It claims service reliability has improved through more investment in staff recruitment and training. A quality incentive regime in London has enabled the group to benefit from bonus payments arising from consistently good performance - but it warns that development of new operating depots continues to be frustrated by planning approval processes in certain local authority areas.

Turnover for its bus operation was £206m for the current peri-

but slowdown in the capital expected



North East is not regarded as biggest growth prospect by Go-Ahead

od, up £13m on the previous year's £193.1m. With operating profit up £1.3m to £29.1m, buses continue to be more important for Go-Ahead's shareholders than rail, but the margin fell slightly from 14.4% to 14.1%.

Go-Ahead has concentrated on areas with economic and population growth, symbolised by a new depot in Oxford, which replaces 1920s-built facilities. Other significant investment took

place around Poole and Bournemouth and revamped services there are expected to deliver significant passenger growth in the current six months.

It expects stability in Transport for London operations, with recent growth slowing. The Gatwick Fastway guided bus services are set to expand, with growth prospects in the south of England regarded as being good.

andrew.roden@emap.com

GO-AHEAD RESULTS AT A GLANCE

	Six months to January 2005			Six months to January 2004		
	Turnover	Profit	Margin	Turnover	Profit	Margin
Bus	206	29.1	14.1	193	27.8	14.4
Rail	294	18.6	6.3	320	19.3	6.0

● Turnover of £637.9m
● Operating profit of £51.4m
● Dividend per share of 15.0p

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Mr P. Worth, Director, Worth's Motor Services Limited.

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Mercedes-Benz

Future looking brighter

WILLIAM GOLDEN CORRESPONDENT

COACH tourism got a welcome shot in the arm in this gloomy time of year with two reports forecasting a bright future.

The reports are also timely, coming in the run-up to British Travel Trade Fair 2005 next week.

In the first positive scenario,

coach holidays got the best ratings for customer satisfaction in a survey by Holiday Which? published in its Winter 2005 edition, with 69% of more than 900 readers questioned saying they would recommend one to a friend.

Coaching outscored holidays

Two reports predict positive scenario ahead

that are generally perceived to be more popular. For example, 65% of those who took cruise holidays would recommend them to a friend, while the figure fell to 62% for long-haul holidays.

And what is considered to be the most popular holiday choice

for the majority of us - going to the seaside/beach - attracted a recommendation of only 46%.

"This is really positive news," said Chris Wales, acting chief executive of the Coach Tourism Council. "To get a higher endorsement than all the other holiday

Set sail to BTTF to remember Trafalgar

IT IS just under a week to go to BTTF 2005 and operators who attend should make sure that they drop anchor at the

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard to learn about its major role in the SeaBritain and bicentenary of the Battle of Trafalgar celebrations.



Hello sailors! BTTF is set to mark Trafalgar anniversary

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard is home to three of the world's most famous warships - the *Mary Rose*, *HMS Warrior 1860* and Nelson's flagship *HMS Victory*. One of the great relics of the Royal Navy, *HMS Victory*'s foretop-sail from the Battle of Trafalgar, the only surviving sail from the battle, will be on public display from March 18 to October 30.

Entry to view the sail will be on a first-come, first-served basis and visit times cannot be booked. It is part of the all-inclusive ticket to the Historic Dockyard or joint *HMS Victory/Royal Naval Museum* ticket.

The International Festival Of the Sea (IFOS) will return to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard from June 30 to July 3 and will feature dynamic displays on land and sea.

● For more information call 0870 043 3929 or go to www.festivalofthesea.co.uk

Extensive refurbishment of The Mary Rose Ship Hall will be



2-3 March 2005
NEC, Birmingham

completed by Easter. It will include a new entrance and exit area that will allow easier access for the disabled.

British Travel Trade Fair 2005 is in Hall 12 of the Birmingham NEC on Wednesday and Thursday, March 2 and 3. The fair will be officially opened at 1100hrs by Lord Marshall, the new chairman of VisitBritain.

● For more information and pre-registration, go to www.britishtraveltradefair.com

Making Beds

BEDFORD Borough Council is launching a new tourism planning service that will tailor visits to the county.

Tourism development officer Joanne Moore said: "Our personal planning service will take the hard work out of arranging group visits and aims to marry up the needs of the group with what this area has to offer."

● Call 01234 227429 or e-mail jomoore@bedford.gov.uk

CTC event to be held at Bristol

OPERATORS are reminded that the Coach Tourism Council's annual conference is taking place in Bristol from Friday to Sunday, March 11 to 13.

The theme of the conference, which is being held at the Novotel, is Partnerships and speakers will include Michael Stevens, the director of global leisure sales for Accor Hotels; Sean Taggart, the managing director of the Albatross Travel Group; and Colin O'Neil, from the Advantage retail travel chain. Their presentations will be fol-

lowed by a question-and-answer session chaired by Chris Wales, the new chief executive of the CTC.

The conference programme includes presentations and a civic reception on the SS Great Britain on the Friday and the annual general meeting of the CTC followed by a workshop on the Saturday. On the Saturday afternoon there will be visits to local attractions followed by a gala dinner.

● For more details contact the CTC office on 01227 762200.



CTC chief executive Chris Wales

for coach holiday sector

options, especially cruising, shows that coach holidays are more popular with the public than is the general perception.

"I am sure that all coach operators can use this information to help highlight why their tours and holidays offer such excellent value and customer satisfaction."

Coach holidays have also come

under the spotlight of market research specialist Mintel (see report on pages 27-30). While the report highlights difficulties faced by the industry - especially for those who fail to adapt to changing market conditions - it also produced many positive messages, said Chris Wales.

"I am delighted Mintel states

there is a huge untapped market for coach holidays and that, with hard work and development of product, the market will grow between 2005 and 2009.

"CTC members are already adapting to the demands of their customers by introducing new holidays, greater choice and more flexible tours both in the UK and

overseas, and the report underlines that this is the way forward."

He added that, as the leading organisation for promoting travel and tourism by coach, the CTC would be taking up the challenges posed by the Mintel report and working to ensure that coaching did not miss out on the opportunities for sustainable growth.

Ferry operators: calmer waters

CROSS-CHANNEL ferry services between Dover and Calais have continued to be disrupted by repairs and maintenance work at the port, but there are signs the situation is



improving.

P&O Ferries cancelled all day trips last week and was operating a reduced fleet of four ships. However, by February 18 another berth

opened for the weekend at Calais, allowing P&O to run a full fleet of six ships.

SeaFrance was operating a "slightly reduced" service with extended sailing times because of the problems at Calais and, like P&O Ferries, was not accepting any day traffic.

The independent operator was again advising operators to avoid the M20 motorway, where police were operating a freight "stacking zone", and use the M2 and A2 to get to Dover.

Buzzlines joins coaching guild

BUZZLINES, the Kent-based coach operator, is the latest member of the prestigious Guild of British Coach Operators.

Paul Frankland, the company's general manager, said: "Membership of the guild reflects our continuing commitment to providing our private and corporate customers with the highest standards of coach travel available.

"Buzzlines already has a strong reputation for going that extra mile to deliver personal service with professional pride. Guild membership emphasises our determination to maintain that reputation and build on it through every aspect of our business."

Welcoming Buzzlines into membership, guild vice-chairman Steve Whiteway, of Epsom Coaches, said: "I am delighted that Buzzlines has demonstrated its ability to meet the exacting standards required of all guild members. We look for-

ward to its contribution to helping all members to up the game in the coach industry.

Customers rightly deserve a quality service and guild members deliver."

The Guild of British Coach

Operators exists to promote the services of its member operators and to provide a forum to discuss and define best practice in the industry.

● **Further details can be found at www.coach-tours.co.uk**



Buzzlines is the latest member of the GBCO

Gorge on Cheddar

THEMED itineraries and details of nearly 150 attractions, including Cheddar Gorge, are featured in a new group travel guide from Somerset Tourism.

The itineraries cover such topics as food & drink, crafts & traditions and houses & gardens, while other items in the 98-page booklet include meal stops, accommodation and incentives for drivers.

There also is a conference section that details more than 150 venues that range from country house hotels and ancient inns to attractions, museums and activity centres.

● **For a free copy of the 2005 guide contact Somerset Tourism on 01823 355255 or e-mail scphillips@somerset.gov.uk**

Rum goings on at festival

A COSTUMED 'PRESS GANG' will be out in force to ensure groups visit Lancaster for its annual Maritime Festival over the Easter weekend (March 25 to 28).

This year's event will tie in with SeaBritain 2005 and will include a Trafalgar Victory Fair. The action centres on Lancaster's 18th Century quayside and the Trafalgar Victory Fair will feature authentically costumed characters re-creating all the sights and sounds of a provincial fair of the period.

A vintage coach service will provide a special public transport link between the Dock and Lancaster Maritime Museum.

● **For more information about the festival contact the Lancaster Tourist Information Centre on 01524-32878**

Legal Eagle

The cost of deductions

Many operators may simply deduct a shortfall from an employee's wages without considering the potential implications. Peter Woodhouse looks into what they are

ALARGE proportion of coach and bus staff have responsibility for collecting and handling cash from fare-paying passengers, but how does an operator respond to a cash shortfall that may be discovered?

Many operators may simply deduct the shortfall from the wages of the employee(s) concerned without any consideration of the potential implications. This week we take a look at the law regarding protection of wages and in particular what constitutes lawful deductions from wages in respect of recoupment of cash shortfalls.

Section 13 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 states:

"1) An employer shall not make a deduction from wages of a worker employed by him unless

(a) The deduction is required or authorised to be made by virtue of a statutory provision or a relevant provision of the worker's contract, or

(b) The worker has previously signified in writing his agreement or consent to the making of the deduction."

Two important things to note are that there must be a provision in the driver's contract of employment authorising a deduction, such contract having been signed by the employee and equally important that the driver's consent must be obtained prior to the cash shortage to satisfy the requirement of a lawful deduction. Operators may be faced with a cash shortage where, after discussing it with the employee, they consent, verbally or in writing, to the deduction from his or her wages to cover the shortage. The law is clear that, even in circumstances such as this, a deduction, consensual or not, is unlawful because the consent will have been obtained after the shortfall took place.

You may ask the question, how do you legally recoup cash shortfalls where there has been no prior consent? The simple answer is "with great difficulty if the person concerned refuses to voluntarily repay the money directly to the operator." If the operator then deducts the shortfall from wages, difficulties may arise if the employee takes issue with the deduction as an operator could face a claim in the Employment Tribunal for an unlawful deduction of wages.

Realistically the only solution available to avoid a potential claim being made by the employee, would be to bring small claims proceedings in the county court against the employee and then obtain judgment against that employee for the amount of the cash shortfall. By way of enforcement of the judgment, deductions could then lawfully be made from the driver's wages. However, this process is far from quick or practical.

Operators are advised to review the contracts of employment for all existing and



new employees and, if required, incorporate a clause that allows for the deductions from wages to cover cash shortages. In the case of current employees, consent in writing should be obtained for any future deductions.

Operators should note that the above provisions regarding deductions from wages do not apply to the recoupment of an overpayment of wages or expenses incurred by the worker in carrying out his or her employment.

A further important question is how much can be lawfully deducted from wages at any one time? The law imposes a limit on the amount and time of deduction from an individual's wages in retail employment in respect of a case shortage.

Section 17(1) of the Employment Rights Act 1996 defines retail employment in relation to a worker as "*employment involving... (b) The collection by the worker of amounts payable in connection with retail transactions carried out by other persons directly with members of the public... retail transactions are to the sale or supply of goods or the supply of services.*"

As coach and bus operators are supplying services to the general public, drivers would fall into the category of workers and consequently, operators are required to comply with the law regarding retail workers, which is applicable even in cases of dishonesty.

Lawful deductions are not to exceed one-tenth of the gross amount of the worker's wages for that particular pay day and the deduction (or deductions) must be made no later than 12 months beginning with the date when the cash shortage was discovered.

In summary, operators should obtain consent prior to the event occurring and in any case, lawful deductions are limited to one tenth of the gross wages.

FACT FILE



Peter Woodhouse

Peter Woodhouse is a partner in the Bond Pearce Transport team and deals regularly with road and passenger transport issues. He is a specialist advocate with full rights to appear in all courts and tribunals in the UK. Peter has a particular interest in employment matters in the transport sector. He can be contacted on 0117 929 9197 or by e-mail at pwoodhouse@bondpearce.com

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Licensing Legal

No-show operator banned

DAVID MILLER CORRESPONDENT

Repute and Finance

THE owner of a North Yorkshire-based coach company paid the ultimate price for failing to attend a public inquiry last week when he had his O-licence revoked.

Tockwith Travel boss Simon Moore was judged in his absence at the North Eastern Traffic Area hearing to have breached sections 16, 17 and Schedule 3 of the 1981 Public Passenger Vehicles Act.

The decision was made at the end of the hearing in Leeds and it means Mr Moore's standard national licence with authorisation to use up to four vehicles was not valid from 1159hrs on Wednesday February 16.

Mr Moore was also given 14 days to appeal against a ruling banning him from holding an operator's licence again.

Traffic commissioner Tom Macartney said this embargo would be imposed should Mr Moore fail to respond to the request to answer criticisms levelled at Tockwith Travel during the public inquiry.

Mr Macartney had earlier stated the hearing by saying he was in receipt of a letter from Mr Moore explaining he could not attend the public inquiry because he had business matters to deal with in Italy.

A transport consultant or solicitor was not present for Tockwith Travel either so the hearing went ahead with only vehicle examiner Paul Stagnell giving evidence.

Mr Stagnell read from a prepared statement and said he made two visits to the

Tockwith Travel owner failed to attend inquiry

company's premises at Tockwith Airfield, near York, on September 6 and 15 last year - but he was not able to inspect any vehicles on either occasion and no maintenance records were produced.

Mr Stagnell also said it seemed that, of the two coaches at the airfield that were marked with Tockwith Travel liveries, one appeared not to have been on the road for some time while the other was now used for training new drivers, even though there was no licence disc in its front window.

'There is not one scrap of evidence to show the company's compliance'

Mr Stagnell said the explanation he was given for this situation was complicated and could not be verified at the hearing because Mr Moore was not present to provide evidence backing up these claims.

Mr Stagnell reported to the hearing that, according to Mr Moore, Tockwith Travel had been taken over several months previously by Charter Coach Ltd, a firm run by Tockwith's former transport manager Anthony Lapiusa.

Mr Moore apparently claimed Charter Coach Ltd subsequently went into liquidation and he was in the process of recovering maintenance records and other paper-

work related to Tockwith Travel after taking charge of the business again.

But Mr Stagnell noted traffic office staff had not been notified of the ownership changes.

Traffic commissioner Macartney decided this was not acceptable and said Mr Moore's absence also meant there was no evidence to prove Tockwith Travel had complied with undertakings given at a previous public inquiry in November 2003 that involved conducting driver refresher training and bi-annual FTA audits.

Mr Macartney said: "There is not one scrap of evidence to show the company's compliance and, therefore, I have to find under Section 16 3A of the Act that statements of fact are not correct and under Section 16 3 AA that the undertakings have not been fulfilled.

"The company also does not seem to have a transport manager or the necessary finances and, therefore, under Section 17 1 of the Act this operator fails the basic test of professional competency.

"In this case I have no idea what the implications of revoking the licence would be but I have concluded that the operator has forfeited his good repute and that revocation is therefore proportionate.

"I also think the operator should be disqualified from holding a licence in this or any other traffic area but I will allow Mr Moore a period of 14 days to make the necessary representations before a final decision is made on that."



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Have your say

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or e-mail mark.williams@emap.com

Cases have received far too little attention

From: CR Butterfield
Herbert Mallam Gowers, Solicitors of Oxford

I was interested to see the Question & Answer about the Bowens case (CBW, February 10).

It highlights a legal point which I have felt for some time has received insufficient attention. You very correctly say British courts have ruled that, during rest time, no work should be carried out for any other employer. However, you are no doubt referring to decisions by magistrates and traffic commissioners, whose knowledge of the law can at times be less than complete and few, if any, of whom appear to be aware of the small number of decisions of higher courts on the subject.

The most interesting and comprehensive decision was in the case of *Witchell v Abbott* (1966). This was under some very old legislation but the provisions were analogous to those applying today. However, the decision is interesting for the statement by the Lord Chief Justice that there was "nothing to prevent an employee from doing anything that he likes during his rest hours, indeed, he could take another part-time job, he could go to a dancehall, he could stay up all night..." That dictum was referred to with apparent

approval in the much more recent case of DPP v Guy (1998).

Even the Skills case said nothing about

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work done for another employer. It does appear from the decision that the Nottingham magistrates might have been seeking an answer to the question that lies behind the Bowens case but the court never answered it. It said only that work included "periods of driving spent by a driver while performing a transport service."

The Bowens case did not concern such driving and my reaction on reading your very full

report was that the traffic commissioner was wrong in his decision.

Your current issue addresses the question of what else an operator might be expected to do to ensure that an offence has not been committed. The proposed revision of Regulation 3820/85, Article 10 paragraph 6 requires a driver employed by "more than one transport undertaking" to provide sufficient information to each to enable them to comply with the regulations. That draft does not refer to a driver having other employment but only to other transport employment. I take the view this supports the proposition that non-transport employment is not of relevance.

There may be other binding decisions of superior courts of which I am not aware, in addition to the ones above referred to. However, those cases have, in my opinion, received far too little attention. When I was discussing this with a solicitor who had advised a client to plead guilty under very similar circumstances to those in the Bowens case, he said he wished he had known at the time of those authorities. It is, of course, no guarantee that the magistrate would have heeded them.

Would you sponsor our Maynes White Water Rafting team?

From: David Mayne
Maynes Coaches, Buckie

On March 20, 2005 a team of eight from Maynes Coaches will be taking part in a sponsored White Water Rafting Challenge at Grandtully in Perthshire to raise money for Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland.

We would be very grateful if readers would consider sponsoring our

team for this event. They are aiming to raise a minimum of £1,000 for the charity and any donation great or small will be very much appreciated, as would any publicity to help encourage any other sponsorship from within the industry.

Anyone interested in sponsorship, please contact David Mayne on 01542 831219.

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Questions & Answers

The Editor, CBW, Emap Active, Bretton Court, Bretton, Peterborough PE3 8DZ e-mail mark.williams@emap.com

Should I change my tachograph charts system?

Q Since reading about the case heard at Chelmsford Crown Court in September last (CBW, October 14, 2004), I have been concerned about my vehicle records system in relation to the ruling by the judge that a driver should use only one chart per day. As the court found that the driver was not guilty of the alleged offence by using more than one chart should I change my system, which is based on a separate 'chart for each vehicle'?

AS, Cheam

A It is our view that you are not acting illegally by requiring drivers to use more than one chart per day.

What matters is the continuity of the individual driver's record, so that his full activities on any working day can be clearly identified. It is for this purpose that the use of manual entries on charts is required when a driver is unable to use a vehicle's recording equipment.

The judge in this case correctly referred to Regulation EC 3821 (Article 15 - Section 2), which requires drivers to use the record sheets on every driving day and not to "withdraw" the sheet until the end of the working day. The Article is clear on what drivers shall NOT do with the sheets in respect of "dirty or damaged" records, withdrawing the sheet "before the end of the daily working period....." and using the sheet "to cover a period longer than that for which it is intended." However (except for the replacement of a 'damaged sheet'), the Article is absolutely silent on the use of more than one sheet by the driver, as it assumes throughout this Section that the driver will drive only one vehicle (ie, the same vehicle) throughout the "daily working period."

It is also clear in this Regulation that the record of work is 'personal' to the driver and not to the vehicle. Section 7 of Article 15 underlines this aspect when it

states "the driver must be able to produce record sheets for the current week and in any case for the last day of the previous week on which he drove." However, as the Article refers to sheets (plural) throughout, it accepts by implication that the working record for the driver may be contained in more than one sheet - even "for the last day....."

Therefore, in our view, it is continuity of sheets (record) that is relevant to the enforcement authorities and NOT the number of sheets used by a driver on any one working day.

As to your filing system for the tachograph charts, it follows from the view expressed above that the charts are primarily records of the work of your drivers and NOT of your vehicles. If you accept that this is the case, you might wish to keep the original charts as driver records (filed by driver name) and use copies of the charts for vehicle record purposes.

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Questions Answers

The Editor, CBW, Emap Active, Bretton Court, Bretton, Peterborough PE3 8DZ e-mail mark.williams@emap.com

Does a ferry passenger list have any other use?

Q Can you confirm that the passenger list required when a coach is taking passengers across the Channel is only for that purpose and is of no other use?
BS, Brighton

A The straight answer is NO! Other use could be vital evidence under the 'Civil Penalty' regulations.

Although the requirement for a 'passenger list' came to the fore when the EU Directive 98/41 took effect on January 1 2000, (requiring ferry operators to collect, register and retain a detailed list of passengers and personnel on board a ferry) a separate regulation, introduced in that year, dealing with 'Clandestine Entrants' (stowaways, etc) placed a duty on coach operators to carry out checks

on their vehicles entering the UK. A 'Code of Practice' sets out security procedures expected to be carried out by operators with vehicles returning to the UK. One of these procedures requires operators to keep a 'manifest' detailing the names of all persons knowingly carried in their vehicles on to ships, hovercraft or trains embarking for the UK. This 'manifest' could take the form of a copy of the 'passenger list' required by the ferry operator - thus requiring only one collection of the relevant data (name, age, sex) about the passengers and crew aboard the coaches.

The 'code,' 'Prevention of Clandestine Entrants', can be obtained from the Home Office (Immigration and Nationality Directorate) tel: 020 8745 6006, e-mail civilpenaltyunit@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk



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Better for the Enviro-ment



The Enviro300 lowfloor bus/chassis had the cards stacked against it with the demise of TransBus, but it has survived. Martin Cole gets a feel for the bus in service

BAD TIMING and the demise of TransBus International meant the Enviro300 never achieved a high profile launch and, with uncertainty over the company's future, a lot of potential orders were lost.

Having had little impetus behind it, Enviro300 sales have been less than impressive, yet this appears not to reflect the vehicle's potential.

Available in either 12m (44/45 seats) or 12.5m (49 seats) lengths, The Enviro300 was designed to be fully DDA compliant and is now produced by Alexander Dennis. It is available as a complete bus or as a chassis for third-party bodybuilders.

Weighing just under 14.5 tonnes, it is powered by a Cummins 5.9-litre, six-cylinder, ISBe engine developing 220bhp and comes with options of either a ZF 5HP 502C, Allison T280R or Voith DIWA D854.3 automatic transmission. All options are fully automatic and come with integral retarders.

Body framing is a combination of steel structures and aluminium extrusions. Body panels are a mixture of aluminium sheets and GRP mouldings.

Three examples, still bearing the TransBus International badge, were supplied to Warwickshire County Council in the second half of 2004 and operate a busy express route

from Stratford-upon-Avon into Birmingham. Warwickshire County Council bought the vehicles along with a Dart SLF to act as back-up and to operate on a number of local schools operations.

Operator

The Enviro300s are operated on behalf of the county by Ensign Bus subsidiary Stratford Blue. Area manager Darren Birch has been very impressed by their performance to date. He said: "I'm really pleased with the

'Low fuel consumption'

Enviro300. Apart from a couple of niggles at the teething trouble stage they have performed reliably and very efficiently. They don't weigh a lot and this is reflected in the low fuel consumption figures. I don't know exactly how many miles per gallon we are achieving but the savings are significant. We used to put 300 litres per day into the Citaros and these only require 100 litres."

"Simplicity is also a key factor in their appeal. The general layout is spacious with plenty of legroom and comfort for passengers. Many need that as the bulk of passen-

gers do seem to travel right through."

Divisional sales manager Glyn Slade was equally enthusiastic: "The Enviro is well designed and so simple to keep clean. Surfaces are easy to wipe down and cantilevered seating makes them so easy to sweep or mop out.

"Things are more straightforward for the driver, too. There is nothing in the cab that shouldn't be there. The seat only moves backwards, forwards, up, down and has an adjustable lumbar support. Combined with an adjustable steering column it only takes a brief time to set up. The controls are all simple and within reach. The gauges, dials and switches are in plain view and you can see everything you need to see at a glance."

Passengers

Running the service reliably and regularly has built up a high level of trust among passengers and there are a number of groups using it regularly, enjoying the experience and passing the message along. A case in point is a group of ladies - referred to as 'the ladies from Wootton', who prefer to use the bus rather than their cars - as much for the social benefit as avoiding problems with parking in Stratford. Without exception, each one readily says they like the buses, they are happy with the service and, because they can depend

'Body framing is a combination of steel structures and aluminium extrusions. Body panels are a mixture of aluminium sheets, and GRP mouldings'

SPECIFICATION	
ENVIRO 300	
Engine:	Cummins ISBe-220 Euro 3, 5.9-litre, six-cylinder turbocharged and intercooled diesel engine
Power:	220bhp (162Kw) @2000 to 2500rpm
Torque:	820Nm (605lbft) @ 1200-1600rpm
Gearbox:	ZF5HP502C Ecomat or optional Allison T280R; Voith DIWA D854.3
Front Axle:	Dana NDS56 I Beam with unitised hub bearings and large kingpins. Lock Angle 53° (12m), 55° (12.5m)
Rear Axle:	Dana 11-26 single reduction axle with ground gears
Standard Ratio:	5.37:1 - max geared speed 92km/h
Suspension:	Two airbags to front and rear axles. Location by trailing taper leaf springs and panhard rod. Double action dampers front and rear. Front axle kneel standard (70mm)
Frame:	Welded mild steel channel and box section structure
Brakes:	Air disc brakes 375mm diameter with ABS
Cooling:	Rear-mounted cassette type radiator and intercooler with hydraulic fan drive. Thermostatically controlled. Separate header tank with side fill point. Quick release filler. Optional integrated condenser for cab air-con
Fuel Tank:	Mild steel, 250 litre (55 gallons) with quick release filter
Exhaust:	Mild steel silencer with rear discharge. Optional stainless steel exhaust, catalytic converter or CRT
Electrical:	Prestolite 172R - 140amp alternator, two x 12-volt 180Ahr batteries. Multiplex electrical system with diagnostics. NATO 24-volt battery boost-socket



► on the reliability, they feel secure. They appreciate the comfortable travelling environment and enjoy the conversation or gossip immensely.

One or two were quick to point out that previous operators on the service, in addition to being unreliable, wouldn't let passengers aboard at the turnaround point in Stratford - until just before the bus was due out. This often meant standing around for ten minutes in the cold with no shelter.

Stratford Blue drivers, all chosen specially for the operation, are typically friendly and obliging - keen to enter into some personal banter with customers. This generates greater trust among passengers and increases their confidence and loyalty. Retaining the same drivers allows them to build up stronger relationships.

Initiative

The situation embodies what Warwickshire County Council and Stratford Blue are seeking to achieve for the service. Darren Birch said: "Warwickshire's initiative means we can operate high quality buses on this service and work to make the service commercially viable by the end of its four-year contract."

Glyn Slade added: "There is no real alternative way forward for smaller operators. I'm really pleased Warwickshire grasped the initiative and saw the sense of investing in services. Between us we aim to build it up and,

hopefully, when the contract expires the route will be self sustaining and there for us or another operator to run. We couldn't have afforded to buy new buses for the service as it was, or still is, but it is growing steadily all the time. There have been some improvements in infrastructure along the route since we took over and Warwickshire also takes care of the route signage, timetables and marketing.

"If we work together in partnership and the route is a full success, it means Warwickshire can move on and invest in another route that could achieve similar ends. That means we, or someone else in the area, will have the opportunity to do it all again.

I feel it is far more constructive than putting support behind lots of small unprofitable services that just remain under funded and barely survive. Operators can't afford to put on new buses in those circumstances."

Just to illustrate a point, as I rode on board the X20 into Stratford, a lady passenger with a large, wheeled, shopping basket made her way comfortably to the front of the bus and paused momentarily to study the lowfloor entrance before asking the driver about wheelchair access. He quickly explained about the manual fold-out ramp but assured her at most stops wheelchairs could come aboard without it, because the kerb and step heights were almost the same. She thanked the driver and told him she would start to

Rear corner mouldings are easy to replace when damaged



Spacious interior offers good passenger comfort

DIMENSIONS

MODEL:	12.0m	12.5m
Overall body length:	11800mm	12550mm
Overall chassis length:	11427mm	12127mm
Wheelbase:	6100mm	6800mm
Overall width:	2550mm	2550mm
Front overhang:	2240mm	2600mm
Rear overhang:	3087mm	3150mm

bring her mother as she'd been in a wheelchair for three years and effectively trapped at home.

Ride

The ride on the Enviro300 is very good. Large windows, comfortable seating and a warm, draught-free interior make the immediate passenger environment pleasant and the suspension system soaks up the worst of the bumps quite adequately. I rode on two of the buses. Both had a few minor rattles that seemed to indicate they were from an early production batch rather than having anything seriously wrong with them. Noise levels on one of them were higher than the other, but neither was annoyingly loud.

Continuous lighting strips were neatly moulded into the coving panels and have dimmer con-

WEIGHT DATA

MODEL:	12.0m	12.5m
Front axle kerb weight:	2770kg	3000kg
Rear axle kerb weight:	5780kg	5800kg
Total kerb weight:	8550kg	8800kg
Front axle plated weight:	5000kg	5000kg
Rear axle plated weight:	9440kg	9440kg
Gross weight:	14440kg	14440kg

trols to adjust the level of illumination.

Use of ABS mouldings to create interior trim gives the E300 a thoroughly modern appearance and adds to simplicity of keeping the interior clean. Customers can opt for tinted side glazing if they wish, and air conditioning for the driver and/or passengers can easily be incorporated.

Warwickshire's choice of a 44-seat layout allows for a small luggage pen adjacent to the front entrance and mounted on the forward face of the wheel box. The pen is hardly substantial but the spaciousness of the saloon allows most shoppers to keep a reasonable amount about them. Few passengers with buggies need to fold them up and stow them any more as they generally find they can make use of the wheelchair bay and side-facing tip-up seats.



Manually operated ramp is rarely needed



Cantilever seats make Enviro300 easy to clean



Moulded seat / wheelbox covers are easily wiped clean

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Are GOOD TIMES round the corner?

It's been a torrid couple of years for parts of the coach industry, but a new report from Mintel suggests there may be light at the end of the tunnel. Andy Roden reports

FOOT & Mouth, budget airlines, rising fuel and insurance costs and a flat market mean that, for many coach operators, times have been tough in the last two years - and it's not getting any easier.

Market research specialist Mintel's latest opus, *Coach Holidays, Leisure Intelligence, January 2005*, pulls no punches about this, but draws some surprising conclusions based on one of the most comprehensive studies ever undertaken on the coach industry.

The most surprising, given the doom and gloom that so often pervades our sector, is that good times may be around the corner - providing operators can take advantage of the opportunities.

The survey is a vital tool for operators around the country: simply put, the coach industry is too fragmented to consider putting together a study like this.

So, what are the findings? In summary, Mintel says that domestic coach travel declined by 10% between 2002 and 2003 but has made a tentative comeback in 2004 with an estimated 5.8 million passengers spending £1.5bn. Nevertheless, due to increasing competition, the domestic market remains largely static with a declining value.

Overseas pure coach travel declined sharply in 2003, however, the fly-coach market is estimated to have grown by 3%.

Fifteen per cent of respondents who have not previously been on a coach holiday would consider going on one (5% of these on a fly-coach tour). Positive features from this untapped market are that it includes people from the pre/no family, family and third-age life stages and those with high levels of disposable income.

Conversely, there is an ever-growing proportion of people turned off by the idea of coach travel and this number has increased sharply since Mintel's last customer survey two years ago.



Independent coach travel to destinations abroad is growing - with Eurolines the biggest player

The market

If this all sounds bad news, there could well be good news for coach firms with the well-documented ageing population of Britain. Population changes are set to benefit coach firms too, with 26% more people being 60-65 by 2009 than in 2003.

Socio-economic changes mean there will be more wealthier people in the ABC1 groups, and more in the lowest E range, suggesting there will be a need for more high-end luxury tours, along with a corresponding rise in

affordable budget holidays.

There was a 10% fall in the number of independent coach travel visits within the UK in 2003, attributed to difficult trading conditions, increased competition from new entrants, and from low-cost airlines and rail.

The majority of coach passengers, says Mintel, are single, mainly separated, divorced or widowed, with more than a third of these travelling unaccompanied. It means there is a massive potential market of single people that coach operators could exploit.

► Six per cent of people in Britain aged over 15 took a coach tour as their last or last but one holiday in 2004, a proportion that has remained stable since 1998.

Coach market size

After falling significantly from its 1999 level of 7.3 million passengers to 5.5 million in 2003, a tentative recovery to 5.9m is expected this year, an increase of around 100,000 on 2004's expected figure - but, despite the fall in passenger numbers, the value is expected to top £1,560m for domestic business in 2005, up 318m on 2004.

While some operators are reporting double-digit growth, many smaller firms are struggling to maintain year-on-year levels.

It says: "The domestic coach sector is going to have to work hard to continue to generate growth. Sustaining and growing the market is essential but this will prove difficult against increasing competition from other travel offers. Moreover, the prime target group for domestic inclusive coach travel is healthier and more affluent and will be increasingly tempted to venture outside the UK."

Leading destinations are the South/South East and Isle of Wight, followed by London and East Anglia - 17.5% of tours were taken in various unspecified regions of England.

Customer information

The overseas coach market has fallen 17% between 1999 and 2003 but this masks, says Mintel, a steep decrease of 32% in coach traffic using sea/tunnel transport in 2003. The overall coach market abroad is expected to bounce back to 2.3 million passengers in 2005, the same level as 1999.

The average cost of a domestic coach trip is around £400 but last year saw a steep rise from £403 to £432, reflecting, perhaps, increased costs accrued by coach operators.

The UK has around 650 coach operators offering holidays, according to Mintel - a figure CBW believes is significantly below the true total.

The number of passengers taking UK holidays is static at around 10% of survey respondents but, worryingly for operators, 23% say they would never travel by coach, a significant increase on 2002's figure of 19%.

Fewer respondents also claim to be inter-



Younger people are using coaches more than for many years - will this growth continue?

'A tentative recovery to 5.9m passengers is expected this year'

ested in taking a day trip by coach - 10% of the population. Those most likely to take coach trips come from Wales, the West and South West, with 20% of people taking a domestic coach trip. Next up was the North West, followed by Scotland.

Solutions

More high-profile advertising is required to address the misconceptions the general public has of coach holidays.

Mintel's exclusive research, conducted in the summer of 2004, suggests that a significant number of respondents are unaware of recent product developments within the industry.

Many potential customers still perceive coach holidays as a choice for the elderly seeking low-cost (and uncomfortable) travel.

In addition, advertising needs, says Mintel, to challenge some of the notions held by the increasing proportion of the population who claim that they would never go on a coach holiday. Mintel recommends a national campaign run on a consortia basis, perhaps co-ordinated by the Coach Tourism Council.

Better facilities - including catering - will be demanded in the future



The fly-coach market is expected to lead overseas growth in the industry but these passengers are not, says Mintel, accounted for in any of the UK national travel surveys.

The report says most passengers go on more than one coach holiday a year. Mintel predicts more operators will offer loyalty schemes to encourage repeat and additional holiday bookings. It thinks more in-depth or easy-pace tours to popular cities will run, giving visitors an opportunity to discover extra elements not covered on previous tours.

More flexibility is needed, with a quarter of respondents complaining of hectic tour schedules or too many early starts. The dynamic packaging permeating the rest of the inclusive tour market will ultimately, Mintel argues, affect the coach holiday market. It may prove challenging to offer more choice but this is increasingly what the customer demands.

Mintel says operators must seek to build in the feel of independent travel on tours, while retaining the features of coach travel that have a broad appeal - modular packages where customers are able to mix and match the elements they want.

Conclusions

Mintel forecasts that the total market for coach holidays will show promising year-on-year growth at current prices, increasing by a further 19% up to 2009, to reach a value of some £2.8 billion. When the effects of inflation for leisure services are considered, this in real terms represents a more sedate increase of 4% over the 2005-09 period.

It says: "Volume growth of coach holidays will be lower than current price growth at 10% between 2005 and 2009, meaning that cost per holiday will rise from £286 to £310, an 8% increase. So the total market can look forward to a steady period of progress,"

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► **'Volume growth of coach holidays will be less than current price growth'**

which, given the fairly dramatic dip in 2003 bodes well for coach operators. However, the market will still remain below the level of 2000 in volume terms, suggesting that work still needs to be done to attract more consumers to this type of holiday.

"The domestic sector, which is the larger of the two, will show below-average growth in that both value and volume growth will be below that of the overall market. At current prices the domestic sector will reach a value of £1.8 billion, an increase of 15%, in real terms. However, expenditure on domestic holidays will remain static.

"Volume sales will rise by 8%, driven by a greater level of domestic advertising. This should provide stimulus for domestic tourism, giving consumers more awareness of what Britain has to offer, which will have a positive effect on the number of domestic trips taken. With value growth being higher than volume, cost per holiday will increase from £265 to £281, an increase of 6%.

"It will be the overseas sector that will drive growth in this market. Expenditure is forecast to reach nearly £1 billion by 2009, a growth rate of 28% from the value of the market in 2005.

"The generally positive outlook of this market should not disguise the fact that coach holidays are only a small part of the overall holiday market, so there is potential for further growth.

"As noted in the report awareness of what coach holidays have to offer remains low, and the advent of low-cost airlines has made things harder for the industry.

"On the first count steps are already being



EXCLUSIVE reader offer

CBW has teamed up with Mintel to offer an EXCLUSIVE deal on the *Coach Holidays, Leisure Intelligence, January 2005* report. Ordinarily, it costs £995, but readers can obtain this report for £895.50 - a saving of 10%. To order your copy or obtain free contents pages, call Helen Henley at Mintel on 020 7606 6000, quoting your subscriber number - it's on the cover sheet that comes with the magazine, or e-mail leisure@mintel.com - Please quote Coach&Bus05 when calling.

made to increase awareness through more focused advertising and publicity campaigns, with emerging destinations perhaps a source of lucrative business."

It all suggests that really positive operators bent on providing the best customer experience possible are set for good times but those unable to adapt to changing market conditions may be in trouble.

In just three pages, though, we've only been able to scratch the surface of what Mintel's remarkable study has to offer.

If you've seen the reader offer panel just to the left, you may well be questioning the price and, at around £900, there's no doubt it is an expensive luxury - but it provides a critical analysis of who's travelling on coaches and why.

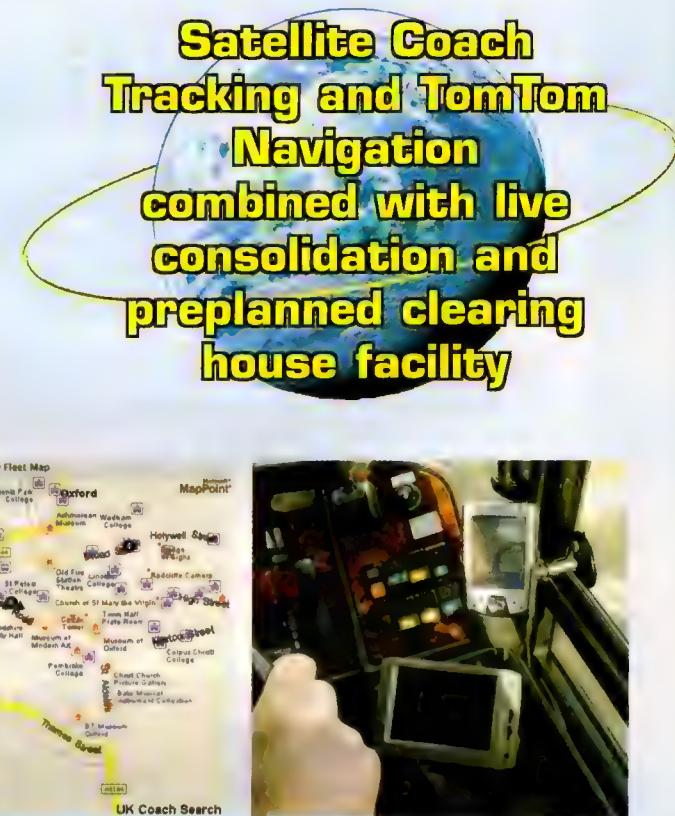
More importantly, it answers the most crucial question of all - why don't people use coaches more? That knowledge is what's needed to unlock the passenger growth our industry so desperately needs.



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What's new

MAHA lines up range

MAHA UK will use this year's Commercial Vehicle Show, April 5-7, to launch its new Automatic Eurosystem test lane - along with a new headlamp aligner and scissor lift fitted with play detectors - all fully computerised.

A major supplier to VOSA and leading commercial transport workshops, MAHA says its new Eurosystem Brake Tester can be supplied in analogue or VDU format and can be extended into a complete test lane for shock absorber and side slip testing - ensuring it is capable of meeting future requirements in addition to immediate legislation. A feature of the new system is a radio 'incab' display unit for cars and commercial vehicles. This not only

displays test results but allows control of all test functions from the driver's seat.

MAHA plans to show a wide range of garage equipment, notably vehicle lifts, and will be introducing Neil Ebbs (right), department manager for MAHA's turn-key workshop development programme. The department employs a range of specialists, who work with customers to develop green or brownfield sites and work with architects, sub-contractors and builders, install and commission workshop equipment and ensure all health and safety regulations are met.

● Details on 01945 476664, website www.maha.co.uk



Neil Ebbs : turn-key development

New scissor jacking beam

A NEW four-tonne scissor-jacking beam has been released by Majorlift.

Supplied with a three-year warranty, the unit is intended to bridge the gap between the 2.8-tonne (Class VII) unit and the heavy-duty six-tonne beam. Designated HPJ4, it comes in two forms. The standard offering has a manually operated hydraulic system and the other includes air-operated hydraulics and comes with a range of optional extensions.

● Details from MD Bob Sims on 01454 292410, mobile 07785 315134, e-mail asquen@dircon.co.uk

Safety nut at CV Show

DISK-LOCK EUROPE, manufacturer and European distributor of the Disc-Lock Safety Wheel Nut, plans to demonstrate at the CV Show in April how the product out-performs conventional wheel nuts and locks tight under severe vibration conditions.

The company will use a Junker vibration machine to demonstrate how a standard nut can rapidly lose tension in the stud in as little as one minute. Under identical test conditions, however, the Disc-Lock Safety Wheel Nut remains tight with no movement, highlighting its advanced safety potential.

Over a two-day period an articulated lorry

with a 35-tonne payload was driven around a figure-of-eight track to apply lateral bending movements to the wheels.

At the completion of each cycle a torque check was undertaken and these revealed no loss of torque on any of the Disc-Lock Safety Wheel Nuts at any stage. The same could not be said of the conventional wheel nuts used, a staggering 50% of which had come loose by the end of the test.

● A copy of the Disc-Lock/MIRA Test Report is available by request on <http://www.disc-lock.com/article.asp?vID=101> or e-mail info@disc-lock.com

Get started in a flash with new portable power packs



DMS TECHNOLOGIES has launched a new range of portable power packs under its Red Flash brand.

Red Flash High Rate engine starting packs are designed for professional use and can be applied to wide-ranging requirements in automotive, commercial vehicle, marine, rail and emergency services areas. They are cased in robust polyethylene mouldings to protect the batteries and electronics from shocks and contamination by workshop oils and fluids.

Fully-insulated cable clamps are employed, using welding grade cables, and top-quality batteries to ensure high cranking rates and reliable starting.

The units offer high cranking rate current of

up to 1100 amps and 2400 amps peak current on larger models. They are protected against surge and power spikes and fitted with a reverse polarity warning buzzer. Certain models also feature an output fuse but all have LED displays showing battery state of charge and charge indicator.

Although the Red Flash units are generally lightweight and portable, an optional trolley is available for the larger units. Models suitable for coach and bus application with 24v systems include the RF1224, RF1224HD or RF24HD.

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24 Coach, Boot Power Door Only 232 K Power Door, Courier

1998 MERCEDES 611D 24 Coach, Boot Power Door Only 264 K Power Door, Belts, Opcare

1997 MERCEDES 611D 24 Coach, Boot Power Door Only 264 K Power Door, Belts, Opcare

1998 MERCEDES 611D 24 Coach, Boot Power Door Only 264 K Power Door, Belts, Opcare

1995 MERCEDES 709D 29 Hi Back Power Door, Only 330 K Power Door, Courier

1996 MERCEDES 711D TURBO Large Boot, Low Mil... Coach Built

24 Coach, Power Door, Perno, Large Boot.

1993 PLAXTON 143 33 Seat, Full Kitchen Shower & TV, 6 Berth, Air Conditioned

2000 24 Seat Power Door, Large Boot Only 281 K

24 Coach, Power Door, Perno, Large Boot.

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16/5 Wheelchairs Stock

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16/5 Wheelchairs Stock</

Mr Robert Gibson trading as
GIBSON DIRECT
and Mr Archie Freeman his operations manager purchased ten Optare Solos 8.5 Metre for SPTE contracts



Supplied by
Blythswood Motors Limited,
1175 Argyle Street,
Glasgow

Also

Mr Tony McMorrin trading as
COLCHRI LIMITED
have purchased Three Dennis 8.8 Darts for SPTE Contracts



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ASHALLS COACHES

1986 C REG LEYLAND OLYMPIANS
ECW bodies,
14ft 6in, in height, 72 and 20 standing. Sept-Nov 05 MOTs.
Choice of 3. 2 vehicles all have been repainted in white and have just been retrimmed. All Gardner Autos
£7,250



1990 G REG SCANIA N113 ALEXANDER
80 seat double deck service bus, MOT April 05, very clean, can repaint and seat belt if required
£20,500



1985/86 LEYLAND OLYMPIANS
Northern Counties bodywork,
14ft 6in in height, 73 + 14 standing. All with long MOTs.
Direct from Stagecoach. Choice of 10. 7, all Gardner Autos
£4,750
BUY FOUR GET 1 FREE



1996 N Reg DENNIS JAVELIN WADHAM STRINGER
55 seater (3+2 new seats with 3 point belts), recently re-panelled, exceptionally clean with only 140,000 km
£39,500

1991 (PP) SCANIA K113 BERKHOF EXCELLENCE

1000, fully automatic, 53 belted seats plus courier, recent engine rebuild by Scania and gearbox overhaul by ZF, looks and drives very well, MOT December 2005. £29,500 + VAT. Part exchange welcome.



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12 months MOT and brand new 70 seat conversion, complete interior refurbishment inc new floor and lino, new side and roof retrim, new 3 point belted seats. New luggage bay floor. A 70 seater that will carry 70 people and their luggage with ease and not die a death at the sight of a hill, Cummins L10 engine with a 7 speed manual gearbox. MUST BE SEEN.

£38,750

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Assortment of Mercedes/Dennis Dart Service Buses, varying from 97-2001, 27-41 seaters.

Also

Assortment of Mercedes 29/33 Seat Coach Specification. Minicoaches

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2002 (Sept) 52 reg, with Stergo "E" body, automatic transmission, 49 reclining seats, climate control, continental door, toilet, servery, video/cd/radio, tinted glass.

Full continental spec, nominal mileage, one year's MoT. Sale due to company closure

**GREAT SAVING ON LIST
PRICE £120,000 + VAT
(P/X considered)**

1994 BLUEBIRD SCHOOL BUSES

71 PLATES

RHD, 51 seats plus 20 standees, Cummins eng, auto transmission, excellent cond, 1 owner, MoT May 2005.

Choice of two.

Very good value.
Part ex-considered

1990 IVECO



28 seats,
rear wheel chair lift,
PSV tested

£3,950 + VAT

SALE

MERCEDES NOUVELLE SR AUTO BUS

Reg Oct 2001 (51 reg), 32 seats, large boot, forced air, P/A, radio/stereo, curtains, tinted glass, nominal mileage. Great saving on new price

Bargain
£59,750 + VAT

1996 DENNIS JAVELIN



Wadham Stringer Mark 3, MoT'd Feb 06, heater system, superb condition. Must see.

Choice of 3

£POA

1998 (July) MERCEDES 814 VARIO

Automatic, MoT, Class 5, 18 seat and wheelchair

BARGAIN

£11,500 + VAT

DENNIS JAVELIN

ex-MoD 12 mtr DENNIS JAVELIN



70 Cogent seats, 1992 into service, air suspension, 6 speed gearbox, Cummins 8.3 engine (recently replaced PA system), MoT October 05 (COF). Registered 2002

£POA

DENNIS JAVELIN 1996

8.5 METRES 31/35

Mk3 body, large boot, 3 point seat belts, high back seats, air suspension, Cummins C220 engine, full years MoT, low mileage. Just fitted new engine. Must be seen, superb condition.

£POA

DENNIS JAVELIN 1993 10 METRE



49 high back seats, air conditioned, sold with 14 month MoT

£POA

DENNIS JAVELIN 1994 8.5 METRE

36 new retrimmed seats

with 3 point belts, 12 months MoT, ready for service

£POA

ASHALLS COACHES

Ashton New Road, Clayton, Manchester. Tel: 0161 231 7777

**MERCEDES 709D**

K Reg, 1992, manual with Alexander bodywork, MoT 28/9/05, recently repainted, 25 seat + 8 standing

£5,750**DENNIS DART**

Y reg, May 01 with Plaxton Pointer bodywork, MoT 19/5/05, recently repainted, 37 seats + 22 standing, 10.7m, very clean and tidy, with modern looking trim

£58,500**MERCEDES**

N reg, March 1996 with Plaxton bodywork, MoT June 05, recently repainted, 33 seats with retractable seatbelts, power door, boot, CD player, very clean for age

£25,000**MERCEDES 814 VARIO**

1 x R reg, Feb 1998 with Plaxton Beaver bodywork, MoT May 05, 27 + 8, auto **£18,500**
as above, 1 x S reg, Oct 1998, MoT full 12 months **£19,500**

9829/VSM

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1992 K REG DENNIS DARTS

9 metres, Cummins/Allison, Plaxton Pointer bodies, 35 seats, good tests



1994/5 L AND M REG VOLVO B6'S

ZF Gearboxes, Volvo engines, 40 seats (some coach seated), large choice. These buses are a good opportunity to buy modern buses at reasonable prices.

£11,000 each, plus tyres and VAT



1988/9 F REG SCANIA 113'S

Alexander bodies, single door, 80 seats with recent retrim.



ROUTEMASTERS . . . Last chance to buy a London Classic. 72 seaters with Cummins engines, all refurbished in the 90's. Ideal buses for weddings, special events or just a toy!!



1991 J REG DENNIS DART

9.8 metres, Cummins/Allison, Plaxton Pointer body, 40 seater, good test



1996 VOLVO OLYMPIANS

Alexander Royale bodies, Coach seated upstairs, large luggage area, air-conditioning, wheelchair lift to front door, lovely condition throughout.



1996 P Reg DENNIS DART

SLF's Plaxton Pointer bodies, 32 seaters, 9.2 metres long



1994/5 L/M REG MERCEDES 709'S,

Alexander bodies 23/5 seats, manual, large choice.



1989 G REG VOLVO D10M

Northern Counties body, 80 seats, test 07/05



1988 F REG LEYLAND LYNX

Cummins I10/ZF, 49 coach seats, new test



1988 E REG LEYLAND OLYMPIAN

Garner 6LXB/Hydracyclic, Northern Counties body, 73 seats, test 03/05



1985 B REG LEYLAND TIGER

48 seats, Plaxton Paramount body, from our own fleet, extremely clean



1988/9 F/G REG LEYLAND LYNX'S,

49 seats, Cummins L10/ZF.



1986 C REG LEYLAND OLYMPIAN

East Lancs body, Gardner 6LXB/Hydracyclic, 74 coach seats, test 06/05



1982 X REG LEYLAND OLYMPIAN

Roe body, Gardner 6LXB/Hydracyclic, 76 seats, good test



1991-94 DENNIS CONDORS,

Arriving now from Hong Kong. Cummins L10 engines, Voith 3 speed auto gearboxes, tinted windows, full air-con throughout, 94 seats with 2 doors or 95 with single door conversion. Refurbished to Firstgroup spec 4 years ago. Limited number available.



1996 DENNIS LANCE

M reg, SLF's, Cummins engines, Berkhof bodies, 2 door with either 33 or 37 seats.



1985/6 B & C REG LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Cummins L10's/ Voith 4 speed auto (60mph), low height (13' 8"), 77 seats, good tests



1986/7 LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Gardner/hydracyclic, ECW semi-low height bodies, 68 seats, long tests, some single door, 72 seaters also available, from £7000



1983 A REG LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Gardner 6LXB/Hydracyclic, low height (13' 8"), 77 seats, all tested well into next year



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Finance available on all above vehicles (subject to status) (written details on request)

1996 P REG MERCEDES 609D



Wadham coachbuilt body, LWB, PAS, full height electric power door with low front entry, 16 - 20 removable high back seats, Unwin tracking, Ratcliff tail lift, Eberspacher heater, ex local council, good condition,

Y REG TOYOTA HIACE 2.0 DIESEL



5 speed, PAS, medium wheel base, low roof, side loading door with step, 6 seats of which 4 are removable seats, Unwin tracking, Ricon fully automatic tail lift, 1 owner mint condition, 22k miles

W & 51 REG VOLKSWAGEN TRANSPORTER 2.5 TURBO DIESEL



5 speed, PAS, medium & long wheel base, 8 high back seats, or 3 plus 1 wheel chair, Unwin tracking, Ricon tail lift, side loading door low entry, ex authority mileage from only 6,500 miles, mint condition, choice of 3

Y REG RENAULT MASTER



TM33, 2.2 DCI, 5 speed, PAS, medium wheel base, O & H conversion, side loading door, 10 seats or 5 plus 3 wheel chairs, Unwin tracking, Ricon tail lift, one owner ex NHS Trust mint condition ,

T REG PEUGEOT BOXER, 2.5 DIESEL



5 speed, PAS, medium wheel base, high roof, side loading door with step, 10 removable seats, Unwin tracking, Ricon fully automatic tail lift, one owner, mint condition, 36,500 miles only

1998 - 2001 REG RENAULT MASTER, 2.5 DIESEL



5 speed, PAS, medium wheel base, high roof, SLD with fold down step, 11 removable seats plus driver and pass, Unwin tracking, choice of ramp or Ricon tail lift, one owner ex local authority, v good condition, choice of 5

1999 - 2002 REG RENAULT MASTER, 2.5 DIESEL



5 speed, PAS, long wheel base, high roof, SLD, 8 - 15 removable seats, Unwin tracking, choice of lowering suspension & ramp or Ricon tail lift one owner ex local authority, good cond, low miles choice of 18

1998 - 2000 IVECO TURBO DAILY 45.10, 2.8 DIESEL TURBO



Irisbus & Mellor conversion, PAS, high roof, 16 - 14 removable high back seats, Unwin tracking, PLS underfloor tail lift, front entry door, low front entry, ex NHS, choice of 2

X REG FORD TRANSIT 190 HI-CUBE, 2.5 DIESEL



Mellor conversion, PAS, high roof, 8 high back seats plus 3 wheel chairs, Unwin tracking, PLS auto underfloor tail lift, full height side loading door with low entry, ex authority, very low mileage

X REG FIAT DUCATO 2.8 TURBO DIESEL



5 speed, PAS, long wheel base, high roof, 13 or 8 high back seats plus 2 to 4 wheel chairs, Unwin tracking, Ricon tail lift, side loading door low entry, ex authority only 25,000 miles ,

1999, S REG RENAULT KANGOO 665D



1.9 diesel, PAS, 5 speed manual, O & H conversion, 3 seat seats, sun roof, rear fold down ramp, electric wheel chair restraints, one owner only ex local authority 36512 miles.

2001 REG RENAULT MASTER T35D, 2.5 DIESEL



5 speed, PAS, long wheel base, steel roof, Mellor conversion, side loading door with sliding step, 16 semi high back seats, one owner mint condition, 50,450 miles, choice of 5/1 remaining

X REG IVECO TURBO DAILY 50C11



2.8 diesel, Mellor Vancraft conversion, PAS, 16 removable high back seats, Unwin tracking, pls underfloor t/lift, slam door low front entry, ex lease low mileage 40-50,000kms choice of 2.

S REG IVECO TURBO DAILY 45.10, 2.8 DIESEL



Euromotive conversion, PAS, 16 removable semi high back seats, Unwin tracking, Ratcliff underfloor t/lift, power door low front entry, destination board, ex council ,

52 REG PEUGEOT BOXER



2.8 diesel turbo, 5 speed, PAS, long wheel base, 14 seats, Unwin tracking, luggage racks, high roof, SLD, Kirkhan conversion, one owner 28,000 miles, mint condition , choice of 2

X REG PEUGEOT BOXER, 2.5 DIESEL



5 speed, PAS, long wheel base, high roof, side loading door with step, 16 high back seats with all age three point seat belts, one owner good condition , 55000 miles only ex school

R REG MERCEDES SPRINTER 312D



2.8 turbo diesel, UVG Lazer body, PAS, LWB, side door, twin York 4 stretchers, with seat backs, bulk head door, Eberspacher heater, strobe blues & siren, one owner, good condition, choice of 15

FRONT LINE EMERGENCY AMBULANCE R REG, FORD TRANSIT 2.5 TURBO DIESEL



UVG Lazer body, 2.5 turbo diesel, PAS, LWB, 2x n/side seats that fold down to a bed/o/s single easy load stretcher, strobe blues & siren, seen lights ,etc, one owner, good condition, choice of 21

V REG, CHEVROLET 3500



Wheeled coach body, automatic, power steering, LWb, air susp, side loading door, 2 near side fold up seats that fold to a bed, easy load stretcher, full air con through out vehicle, high spec, lot's of equipment, one owner, mint con. Choice of 2

1999 V REG RENAULT MASTER FRONT LINE, TH35D, 2.5 DIESEL



5 speed, PAS, long wheel base, side loading door, 5 seats plus stretcher, Rolac ramp, Unwin tracking, blues & two's,high spec, piped oxygen etc, one owner mint condition

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We have the following used vehicles for sale: -New Winter Sale Price

1989 SETRA S215HD (White) 49 reclining seats, toilet, fridge, radio & pa system. Wired for video. MOT'd till Dec 2006**£22,500. o.n.o**

1990 SETRA S215HD all details the same as above. MOT'd till Dec 2006**Price £25,000. o.n.o**

1997 SETRA S 250 (8 Speed Gearbox 4/4) (P) plate with 48 reclining seats, fridge, toilet, tv/video, hot water dispenser. Taxed and MOT'd. These vehicles are in immaculate condition and have been maintained to a very high standard. Choice of 3**Price £77,500 each**

1997 SETRA S 250 AUTO. (R) plate with the same specifications as the vehicles above. Again there is a choice of 3**Price £82,000 each**

1998 VOLVO B10M CATAENO ENIGMA (White) 51 reclining seats with air-con, radio pa system, wired for video and MOT'd till March 2006. Price ..**£70,000. o.n.o**

1998 VOLVO B10M CATAENO ENIGMA (silver) with 49 reclining seats, toilet, radio pa system, tv/video MOT'd till June 2005.**Price £67,500. o.n.o**

1996 TOYOTA OPTIMO'S choice of 3 (2 silver 1 white) with lge boots all have air-con & radio/pa systems with large boots. MOT'd till March & April 2006**Price £12,500. o.n.o**

1997 TOYOTA COASTER (4 CYLINDER) 18 seater with air-con, radio pa system & large boot. MOT'd till Feb 2006 (will sell with new MOT)**Price £12,500 o.n.o**

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Contact Peter on 0131 554 5413.

We also have a vacancy for a fully qualified diesel mechanic at our Edinburgh Base.
Experience with Setra, Scania & Volvo engines preferred but not essential as supervision will be given

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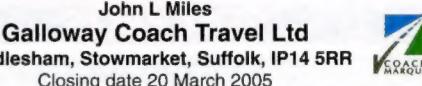
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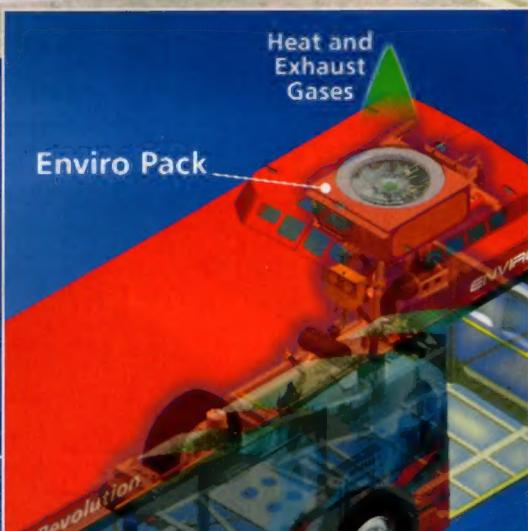
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